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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5922
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO PRIORITY 0188
RUEHSN/AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR PRIORITY 0187
RUEHFL/AMCONSUL FLORENCE PRIORITY 1722
RUEHMIL/AMCONSUL MILAN PRIORITY 7652
RUEHNP/AMCONSUL NAPLES PRIORITY 1835
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SUBJECT: ITALY CO-CHAIRING COMMUNITY OF DEMOCRACIES WORKING GROUP

REF: A. STATE 149622

[1](#)B. STATE 149099

[1](#)1. Poloff delivered Ref A demarche on the Community of Democracies (CD) Ministerial September 12 to Gabriella Biondi, MFA Acting Office Director for UN Affairs, and Brunella Borzi, MFA OSCE Office Director (and CD coordinator). Poloff noted we plan to focus our participation on the success of the UN Democracy Fund (UNDEF) and highlighted the need to show support for civil society and NGOs. Biondi and Borzi agreed the CD was an excellent forum and noted that Italy was taking a leadership role as one of the co-chairs (along with Sri Lanka and El Salvador) of the Working Group on National and Transnational Threats to Security.

[1](#)2. According to Biondi, Prime Minister Romano Prodi's center-left government (in power since May) was still considering how to follow through on the previous government's UNDEF pledge that has not been fulfilled. Poloff noted and Biondi agreed the upcoming ministerial provided a good opportunity for the GOI to make a decision. Biondi and Borzi said Foreign Minister Massimo D'Alema was tentatively scheduled to participate in the CD Ministerial, but that Under Secretary Gianni Verneti would represent Italy if FM D'Alema wasn't able to attend.
SPOGLI